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BY EDMUND VANCE COOKE

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Impertinent Poems (Forbes & Co.), Cloth, 75 Cents.

Dodge Publishing Company,
23 East 20th Street, New York.

Chronicles of the Little Tot

Edmund Vance Cooke

Illustrations by
Clyde O. De Land

New York
Dodge Publishing Company
23 East 20th Street

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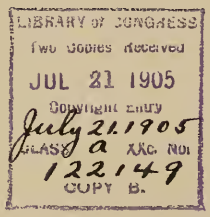

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[Chronicles of the Little Tot]

First Edition, June, 1905.

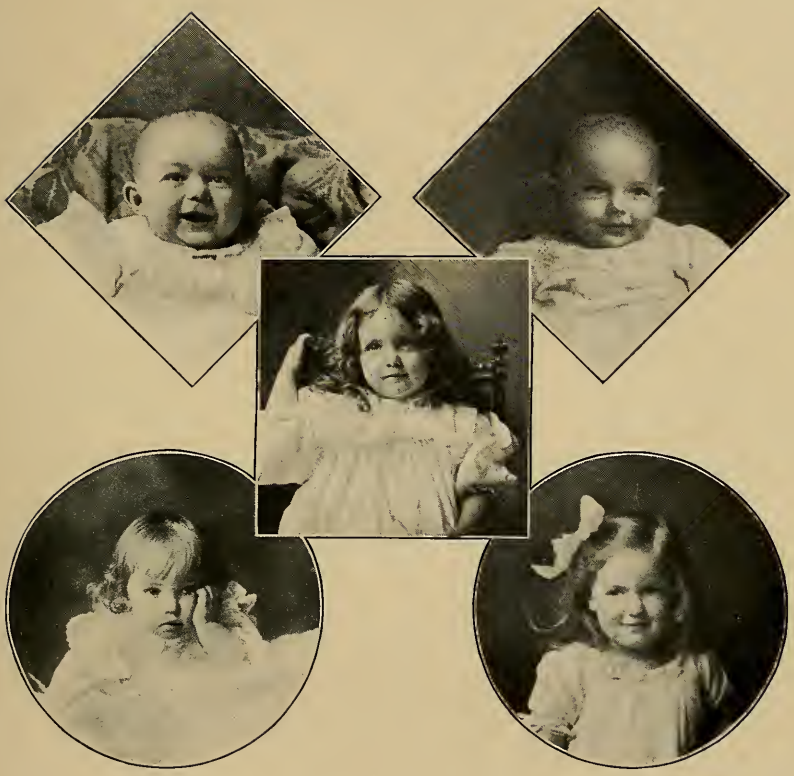
NOTE.

Of the poems in this collection, two have appeared in "A Patch of Pansies," and two in "Rimes to be Read." These are included in present volume because it is thought desirable to keep the child-verse of the writer grouped under the same covers as much as possible.

Courtesy credit for the remaining verses is extended to Lippincott's, The Delineator, Book-Lovers, Success, N. E. A. Syndicate, Saturday Evening Post, Youth's Companion, Chicago Times-Herald, Cleveland Press, Harper's Bazar, Puck, and St. Nicholas, which publications first presented them in print.

E. V. C.

DEDICATION.



To Their Mother and These

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The Cradlers.

THROWING THE SHOE.

THE bride was ringed and the bride was kissed,
As pink and proud as a queen of tourney;
The groom was fuming the train was missed,
So forth they fared for the wedding journey.
Just then, with a peal of parting laughter,
The bridesmaid clattered an old shoe after.

The old shoe lay in the garden grass,
While the lovers loved and teased and pouted,
And when they returned it had come to pass
A strange new shrub in the yard had sprouted!
Next spring, when the apple trees were blowing,
A beautiful bloom on the shrub was growing.

The summer was fine and the fall was fair;
The fruits of the orchard trees had ripened;
And the new tree labored and bore—a pair,
Which paid to the year its little stipend—
Twin little fruit of the softest leather
Hung and swung in the autumn weather.

Year after year there was never a lack;
There were ones and twos, there were fives and sevens;
At first they were white, then red, then black,
And often the bridegroom cried "Thank Heavens!
Blessings be on that Junetime laughter
And the seedling shoe which the maid threw after!"

THE INTRUDER.

HE is so little to be so bold!
Why, he came to the house (so I've been told)
And his very first call
Sufficed to install
The waif on our premises, once for all.
Somehow or other the rogue got in
And claims to be of our kith and kin!

He is so little to be so loved!
He came unbooted, ungarbed, ungloved,
Naked and shameless,
Beggared and blameless,
And, for all he could tell us, even nameless!
Yet every one in the house bows down
As if the mendicant wore a crown.

He is so little to be so loud!
O, I own that I should be wondrous proud
If I had a tongue,
All swiveled and swung,
With a double-back-action, twin-screw lung,
Which brought me victual and keep and care,
Whenever I shook the surrounding air.

He is so little to be so sweet!
You can see that he wouldn't count much as meat.

The Intruder

Seven pounds or eight
Isn't very much weight
To be sold on the hoof, yet I dare state
Some extravagant buyer might be found
To offer as much as a dime the pound.

He is so little to be so large!
Why, a train of cars or a whale-back barge
Couldn't carry the freight
Of the monstrous weight
Of all of his qualities, good and great.
And though one view is as good as another,
Don't take my word for it. Ask his mother!

THE MARVEL.

A DAINTY flower has formed to flesh,
A blossom from some fairy tree
Which keeps its tender spirit fresh
Upon the dews of Arcady,
And bore the sweetest bud that ever was or is-to-be.

The zephyred breath which wafts across
The lips which tempt the honey-bee!
The tumble of the silken floss,
Which seems a halo, though, to me,
Which frames the softest light that ever shone on land or sea!

The pink which shames the rose's leaf,
The purity of neck and knee,
The crinkle of its little grief,
The dimple of its dainty glee,
The fairest, sweetest, purest, best!—'tis all of these to me.

OPULENCE.

THE wee, wet kiss against my lips,
The warm head in its shoulder nest.
The little legs across my chest,
The froward little finger tips;
These common riches of the race
Are past all gains of pelf and place.

The sword may conquer throne and state,
The song may win the poet's bays,
Finance may make another great
Or learning widen out the ways;
Choose as you will! My choice is best;
The little life across my breast.

Tho' Shakespeare were a petty name
To mine and Plato were my fool;
Tho' kings were subjects of my rule
And nations pawns to play my game;
How poor I were, had I not pressed
This little life against my breast!

THE SUPERLATIVE.

HOW shall we say it? How express
The measuring words of the measureless?
For
it's just as sweet as a baby.
There!
How else can I measure it? how compare?
The honeyed dew on the morning clover?
The song of the lark where the blue bends over?
What the advantage, or what the hope
Of any hyperbole, metaphor, trope?
Can any of these express the thrall
Of a baby's sweetness? Not at all.
Image and simile rise and fall,
But sweet as a baby tells it all.

Ah! how define the superlative elf
But to use its own superlative self,
So
it's just as dear as a baby.
There!

The last word's said and the rest is air.
If love be joy, does any joy cling
More close to the heart than this wee thing?
If love be service, is not this mite
Served by us gladly, day and night?

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

O, some love place and a courtier-crawl,
And some love name and a soldier-brawl,
And some love fame and a poet-scrawl,
But the love of a baby tops them all.

CRADLE SONG.*

TO sleep the corn is sinking,
For heavy hangs its head;
The timid flowers are shrinking
From darkness in their bed.

And evening breezes flocking
Like gentle angels blest
Come softly, softly rocking
The corn and flowers to rest.

And as the flowerets shrinking,
So timid, too, art thou,
And as the corn-heads sinking,
So nods thy dear head now.

And sounds of evening winging
Like little angels blest
Come softly, softly singing
My darling one to rest.

---

*From the German of Hoffman von Fallersleben.

UNDER ORDERS.

OH, I am the fag of the infantry,
The raw recruit of the company.
From the bivouac, ready for night alarms,
I stumble up at the cry "To arms!"
I hurry to where The Commander lies
And Present—Arms! to still his cries.
"Halt! Beware!
Who goes there?"
"Thy father's spirit doomed, at sight,
For a certain time to walk the night."

Oh, I am the jest of the promenade,
Shivering there on undress parade.
The Commander cries "Right shoulder—shift!
Attention—father!" Steady and swift,
I hasten to heed his every whim
And Carry—Arms! and likewise him.
"Halt! Take care!
Who goes there?"
I send my song across the dark:
"'Tis the nightingale and not the lark."

In fatigue dress, flowing loose and white,
I drill through the crawling hours of night.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

I "Forward—march!" I "Charge!" I "Wheel!"
I "Double—quick!" but still I feel
The Commander, all unmollified,
Conceives me still unqualified.
"Who goes there?
Stand and swear!"
"How sharper than a serpent's tooth
To have a sleepless child, forsooth!"

BAWL-IN-THE-FACE.

UGH! ugh! little Bawl-in-the-face,
Whooping the whoop of the vanished race,
Tell me when did you come to town,
With toes turned in,
And a red, red skin,
And blanket hanging down?
How have I harmed you, and where and when?
Or have you been at the bottle again?

Wah! wah! little Lungs-in-a-race,
Leading each other a terrible chase,
Tell me! when will the trouble cease?
Why show your wrath
On the wild war-path
These piping times of peace?
I'm doing the ghost-dance all I can,
And hush! here comes the medicine-man.

Boh! boh! little Boss-of-the-place,
I believe I'll brave you to your face.
Though you've my scalp and mama's, too,
'Tis my belief
You are neither chief
Nor brave, so boh! to you.
Oh, yes, I see that your head is flat,
But where is your scalp-lock, tell me that!

The Creepers.

The Baby on the Floor

DRAWN BY BESSIE COLLINS PEASE

THE BABY ON THE FLOOR.

WHEN Adam first knuckled the sand from his eyes
And planted the clay of his feet on its loam,
The Garden looked not half so fair, I surmise,
As the Eden whose commoner spelling is Home.

And even when woman came onto the stage
And he vowed to this Eve he would ever be knight,
And he worked not a lick, though the world was his wage,
Even then he was minus the chiefest delight.

Paradise never was. With a stroke of my quill
I prove the whole story absurd on its face.
Paradise never was, you may preach as you will,
With never a baby in all of the place.

And yet I recall that a creature there was
Which went on its belly and ate of the dust.
(I hope you will pardon this language, because
In quoting one uses the words which one must.)

And lo! in my Eden a creature I find
(How very peculiar the passion for pets!)
Which bellies along and is sadly inclined
To eat of the dust every chance that it gets!

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

As wise as a serpent and minus the sting,
And harmless, beside, as the scriptural dove:
In my bosom I warm it—this wrigglesome thing—
Which long ago wriggled its way to my love.

It wriggles and curls 'round the roots of my heart,
So I say it again, as I said it before,
The Eden of Adam was doomed from the start
Without a wee baby to roll on the floor.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

THE GRAND LAMA, JR.

AND would you learn the potent cause
  Which yields me this profound content,
The hidden working of whose laws
  Is boundlessly beneficent?
Know, then, it contemplates no plan
Of faith in God, or trust in man.
It lies beyond all mere opinion
Of Arian dogma, or Arminian,
Of Calvin's creed, or creed Socinian,
Of Kantian logic, or Darwinian.
And yet serene and calm and high
It raises me. The world goes by
  And joy may pass, or woe may come,
Yet with a mild and placid eye
  I sit—and suck my thumb.

Yet was this calm, Nirvanic height
  Not compassed at a single bound.
When first these eyes beheld the light
  And on this planet gazed around,
I viewed full many a wrong and ill
Which would not let my soul be still.
The grievous question rose eternally
How oft one ought to dine diurnally,
Which pabulum would soothe internally,
Or which cause colic most infernally.

And then The Solace came to dry
My tears, to still my bitter cry,
  To bid my agony be dumb.
And all was well with me, for I
  Had learned—to suck my thumb.

The world around I plainly see
  Is trouble-tossed and passion-rent.
I would that it might learn from me
  The law to soothe its sad lament.
Yea, even I see my honored sire
Beset by worry, grief, or ire,
Nor can he find an absolution
In Stoic teaching, or Confucian,
In Plato's thought, or wit of Lucian,
Spencerian lore, or Rosicrucian.
Yet here I sit beneath his eye
And silently exemplify
  A rule of life to overcome
His every woe. I wonder why
  He will not—suck his thumb!

BABYKIN-BOYKIN-BOO!

(A Nonsense Rhyme.)

DID the baskety woman a-sweeping the sky
Discover the Babykin there?
Did she tumble him down from his nest on high
Through all of the sky-blue air?
Did she find there was never a room to spare
In the toe of her sister's shoe?
Surely that was enough to scare
The Babykin-Boykin-Boo!

Did the moon-man give him a half a crown
And tell him he'd better be born?
And with Jacky and Jill was he tumbled down
One summery, shiny morn?
Or did Babykin-Boykin come to town
On the cow with the crumpled horn?
Did the Babykin lie on her back asleep
On a mattress of genuine hair?
And did Simon the simple and Little Bopeep
Come skipping along to the fair?
Did they blatantly blow a terrible blare
On the horn of the Little Boy Blue,
To wake him up with an awful scare?
Poor Babykin-Boykin-Boo!

But if Babykin-Boykin now will stay,
We'll feed him on victuals and drink,
And the Muffety maiden will give him some whey
And a pat of her curds, I think.
And the toes of the Banbury dame shall play,
And her fingery bells go "chink!"
And the hey-diddle cow shall jump in the air
As high as she used to do.
Oh, dear me! but she must not scare
Our Babykin-Boykin-Boo!

JANUS, JR.

WHINY and Shiny are two little elves
Who have a strange habit of swapping themselves.
Perhaps you are visiting Shiny, when pop!
Along comes old Whiny and tells you to stop.
And you're willing to stop, for while Shiny is jolly,
Poor Whiny is mad of a sad melancholy.
Go 'way, Whiny!
Come back, Shiny!
Come back, little Shiny, I see you there peeping
From back of old Whiny. And Shiny comes leaping.

Gladsome and Badsome are certainly twins,
But one of them quits where the other begins.
When one of them peeps from a little boy's face,
The other one takes himself off of the place.
Wherever the first is the other can't stay;
If the second comes back, then the first runs away.
Go 'way, Badsome!
Come back, Gladsome!
For Gladsome is just round the corner and hoping
His owner will call him. And back he comes loping.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

Cheerful and Tearful are curious creatures;
They are nothing alike, yet they have the same features.
But Tearful's a bad little imp who annoys
The papas of girls and the mamas of boys,
For he blurs the bright eyes of the sunniest darling
And frets a sweet voice till he gets it to snarling.
Go 'way, Tearful!
Come back, Cheerful!
For Cheerful is brimming with music and laughter
And wherever he comes, Sunshine follows him after.

THE SONG OF THE SOCKS AND SHOES.

THE little pink pigs have been rooting around,
Rooting around all night,
Though I warned them well they must slumber sound
Till the blink of the morning light;
I warned them well, as the owner I gowned
And snuggled them warm and tight.
But though I told them they mustn't peep out,
The little pink pigs have been rooting about;
I warned them one and I warned them ten,
So now they must go in the sock-and-shoe pen,
The pen of the sock and shoe.

First the sock and then the shoe; it's nearly eight o'clock!
Lock the little pigs in the sock,
Shoo the little pigs in the shoe,
Den the little pigs in the pen,
The pen of the shoe and sock.

The little pink pigs, with a wriggle and dive,
All under the gown they run,
While the owner watches me coax and drive,
And giggles a gale at the fun,
And squeals as I swoop on a drove of five
And capture the five in one.

Oh, the little pink pigs have been rooting about,
Though I warned them well they mustn't peep out,
So I capture five and I capture ten
And drive them into the sock-and-shoe pen,
The pen of the sock and shoe.

First the sock and then the shoe, and then the shoe
and sock;
Lock the little pigs in the sock,
Shoo the little pigs in the shoe,
Den the little pigs in the pen,
It's almost eight o'clock!

The Cruisers.

Cruise of the Little Tot

DRAWN BY BESSIE COLLINS PEASE

THE CRUISE OF THE GOOD SHIP LITTLE TOT.

DO you know the ocean called Nurseyfloor?
You think it a safe sea, like as not,
But the Rug-Reef lies in a dangerous spot,
And the Table-Leg and the Open-Door
Are perilous rocks for the "Little Tot";
Unbuoyed, unbelled, and unmarked by a light
To pilot the venturous mariner right.
Yet the "Little Tot" bravely prepares to start,
And weighing anchor at Papa's Knee,
And pointing a course to take the lee
Of Bedside Ledges, she studies her chart,
And to Mamma's Lap Harbor forth sails she.
And it's yo ho ho, and all hands stand by!
And it's steer by the light in the Harbor eye.

She touches the port of Grandma's chair,
And all the inhabitants cheer with glee,
Hip, hip, hip and a three times three!
She provisions herself with candy there
And turns her prow to the open sea.
She waves farewell to the friendly shore
And sails where never she sailed before.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

A lurch to port and a starboard list;
Steady, there, steady; keep her straight!
'Tis a terrible sea to navigate.
A stagger, a plunge, and a sudden twist;
  She is going aground as sure as fate!
And Mamma's Lap Harbor and Papa's Knee
Pull the good ship "Little Tot" out of the sea!

THE TALK OF TWO-YEAR OLD.

"PITYPAT, pitypat," over the floor;
"Knickaknock, knickaknock," heard at the door;
And the small, soft tones
That the Two-year-old owns
Cry the curious cry "Dubbydo'! dubbydo'!"
'Tis a mystical tongue, but I happen to know
That it means (as nearly as words can state;
'Tis a difficult thing to quite translate),
"Father dear, I am here and dislike to wait.
Will you kindly open the door for me?
For I can't quite reach the knob, you see."

In prances Two-year-old, charging my knee,
Filled to the brim with imperious glee.
"Hin up!" is her cry,
Which I cannot deny,
For I read what she means by the light in her eye.
"Father dear" (I interpret), "pray heed my behest
To be placed on your knee, there to sit and to rest.
And, furthermore, do me the favor, I pray,
To grant my demand with no vexing delay."

I obey and the Two-year-old promptly demands
All things in the sweep of her plundering hands.
"Taw dat?" cry the lips
And the pink finger-tips,

And of course it is clear that they mean "Father dear,
What is that cylindrical rod in your ear?
Is it merely a method of dressing your hair,
Or has it some deeper significance there?"

I humbly explain how a pencil is used
And Two-year-old deigns to be highly amused.
"Me! me!" she demands,
Reaching wide-fingered hands,
Whose intent, plainly meant, is to say, "Sir, I'm sent,
By the monosyllabicist I represent
To bid you deliver that marvelous treasure,
Or suffer the pain of our deepest displeasure."

She grasps the stiletto, unsheathed from my ear,
And then like a Bayard, devoid of all fear
And ripe for a row,
Bends back and cries "Dow!"
Which signifies, "Sir, 'tis my wish to retire
From the throne of your knee. I've achieved my desire
And I crave a seclusion, with nobody nigh
To prevent me from running this point in my eye.
And I also decline to allow a complaint
Should my pleasure impel me to suck off the paint."

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

"Oh, Two-year-old, Two-year-old, hark to my cry,
Prithee yield me the weapon and poke not your eye!"
"Na! na! na!" comes the word
And I blench as 'tis heard,
Yet gird up my courage and do the rash deed,
As Two-year-old curses me, root, branch and seed.
To the portal she flies, as she cries "Dubbydo'!"
And the pregnant portent of that accent I know.
"I loathe thee and leave thee," it says. "Nevermore
Will I rattle the knob of thy traitorous door."
. . . . . .

And 'tis fully five minutes, or possibly ten,
Ere Two-year-old comes for admittance again.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

THE FACE IN THE WINDOW.

I.—GOOD-BYE.

A LITTLE face shines at the window-sill,
Like a morning sun peeps over a hill,
And I, looking up from the path below,
See the wee face cloud as I turn to go.
And the clouds melt into a mist which tries
(Such a troublesome mist!) to blur my eyes
That my good-bye glances may scarcely see
The little sun-face which clouds for me.

II.—EN ROUTE.

When the frosted stars of the winter night
Look down on the dead earth shrouded white;
When the sun-god sends his quickening breath
To grant new life to the clay-cold death;
When the spring flower turns in its mossy bed
And up from the pillow lifts its head;
When the wood on the edge of the sky is traced,
Like shimmering azure fringed and laced;
I see their beauty—and also see
The face which the window holds for me.

III.—OBEISANCE.

O, whether on land or whether on sea
That little sun-face still shines for me,
And I am a Parsee and worship the sun
Which symbols the shine of my own little one,
Which enlightens my night, which illumines my noon,
Whether clouded or clear be the sun and the moon.
And lo! as the sun down the West's abyss
Sinks slowly and sends me his good-night kiss,
I am sending it back in the hope that he
Is kissing the face in the window for me.

THE TAX LIST.

OH, Mr. Assessor,
Why, what a bad guesser
You seem, as I look at your list!
How poorly you measure
The weight of my treasure!
How many the items you've missed!

"Am I horrid with hogs?"
"Am I rabid with dogs?"
"Am I burdened with horses and cattle?"
Pish! tush! sir, I own
The best stock ever known,
And its brand is the bottle and rattle.

You have spaces for wheels
And for automobiles,
For carriages, high-carts and low-carts;
I possess none of these,
But I'd like, if you please,
To list my assortment of go-carts.

Bonds? Stocks? Ha! I see
You're a stranger to me.
And "Money in banks?" Ah, assessor,
I'm with you at last,
But the banks are locked fast
And we keep them upstairs on the dresser.

What else do I own?
Why, I'd have it be known
My riches would dazzle a Croesus;—
Books, tattered and torn,
Toys, battered and worn,
And little gowns coming to pieces.

Little heel-holy hose,
Little shoes with the toes
Stubbing through, which is one way of knowing
My blessings increase,
So my soul is at peace
And my God-blessed riches are growing!

THE SPRING-CLEANING BABY.

I CAN'T imagine what I've done,
Or why I'm so neglected;
Once I was loved by everyone,
But now I'm scarce respected.
They used to titilate my ear
With pretty names, devoid of meaning,
But now the only names I hear
Are "Now Be Good! Spring Cleaning!"

My cry once made the household run
To offer the attention due me,
But now I bawl and squall, and none
Appears to even hearken to me.
I sit upon the floor while they
Sail by, with heavy loads careening.
When I protest, they only say:
"Be Good! Out Way! Spring Cleaning!"

Why, once they used to watch me so
It almost made my brain grow dizzy;
'Twas "Ah, ah, ah!" and "Oh, no, no!"
But, yesterday, while they were busy,
I ate two tacks, some moldy bread,
A piece of soap and half a greening,
And when they caught me, all they said
Was "Do Be Good! Spring Cleaning!"

Why, once they flew at every speck
  Upon my face with fearful rigor,
And once they grabbed me by the neck
  And wiped my nose with needless vigor;
But now I play in mud or dust,
  And no one dreams of intervening;
It's odd, but I suppose that's just
  What's meant by this "Spring Cleaning!"

AN ARBITER OF TITLES.

I.

HAVE you been so well commended,
So attended, or befriended,
That this maiden condescended
To receive you, bowed and bended?
She, the proud Miss Michaella
Consuella Arabella,
The F. F. V., the D. A. R.,
The bas bleu and the social star!
She's toute au fait and comme il faut
And all her words and actions show
Exactly thus, precisely so.
Particularly does she claim
A nice observance of her name
And signs it fully, "Michaella
Consuella Arabella,"
For less than that she does not like.
Yet when this maiden goes to see
The Little Tot, she's glad to be
Just plain "Aunt Mike."

II.

Have you met that dame of graces
Whose aristocratic face is
Finely wrought as priceless lace is,
Or the rare of rarest vases?

She, a Van der Stuyphen-Stuyphen
Of the bluest-blooded hyphen!
She, the cream of richest cream,
La plus grande dame des grandissimes,
In the halls of whose colonial
Ancestry the ceremonial
Pales the ducal and baronial!
Particularly is she set
And rigid in the etiquette
Which doth hedge the cherished hyphen
Linking Stuyphen unto Stuyphen,
'Tis the crest and oriflamme
Of her race and place, yet when
The Little Tot's her guest, why then
She's just plain "Gram."

III.

Visiting among your betters,
Have you met that man of letters
To whom all of us are debtors,
Him whose total title fetters
All the alphabets of story
To express the half its glory?
For he's A. B. C. to X. Y. Z.;
He's P. D. Q. and Q. E. D.,
Famous, flattered, celebrated,
Feasted, banqueted and feted,
Ribanded and decorated!

And he's proud of his degrees,
Of his D's and double D's,
Scientific, civil, moral,
For he is so decked with laurel
That he's heavy at the top.
Yet when he views the Little Tot
All other titles are forgot
Except plain "Pop!"

THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE.

I LOVE to view the sea at night,
Torn by the storm-king's awesome might.
The wild waves lead the fierce attack;
They meet the wind which beats them back
With cries of mad commotion:
And I—I think of nights agone
When Peter raged with wind upon
His stomach, like this troubled ocean.

I love to call the immortal roll,
Of history's emblazoned scroll,
To read of revolution's hour
When men go mad with wrath and power
And every soul's seething.
It holds me in a mute amaze
And minds me of the fretful days
Which little Peter had while teething.

I love the accents of the stage,
The noble grief, the rhythmic rage.
Oft have I viewed the tragic queen
Portray Camille in that sad scene
Which marks her mournful taking-off.
It sets my soul upon the rack
And brings such fervent memories back
Of little Peter's whooping-cough.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

I love to lift my wondering eyes
To view the marvels of the skies.
Who tinted them that perfect hue?
What Artist stretched that boundless blue
    Upon his myriad easels?
What cosmic brush was this which swirled
Planet on planet, world on world,
    As thick as little Peter's measles!

The Climbers

The Childhood of Spring

RAWN BY BESSIE COLLINS PEASE

THE CHILDHOOD OF SPRING.

WHEN shine and shadow play across the sky
And daisies hold their haloed heads on high,
Then all the earth is as a little child,
Smilingly tearful, boisterously mild,
Then drops the husk of years from off the soul
And long-lost freedom in us seems to sing;
Ah, earth was sick, but Spring has made it whole,
And life was old, but childhood comes with Spring.

TWO LITTLE SERVING-MEN.

TWO little serving-men have I,
And one is strong and very spry.
He loves to hammer, plane, and saw,
To write, and, sometimes, even draw.
He takes my hat and hangs it up;
He reaches down my drinking-cup;
He winds my top, and throws my ball.
I couldn't get along at all
Without this little serving-man
Who helps me out in every plan.

The other sympathizes, too,
But is not half so quick to do.
Some things he does quite well, but my!
Some others he won't even try.
He will not split the kindling-wood,
And yet, he is so very good
He holds it while the other chops.
He also helps him wind my tops;
But spin them? He can't spin at all.
You ought to see him throw a ball!
Just like a girl! And—it's a shame,
But he can hardly write his name.

And yet, these serving-men are twins,
And look as like as two new pins.
I think, perhaps, you'll understand
If you should know their name. It's Hand,
And one, you know, is Right and deft;
And one, of course, is slow and Left.

And yet, you know, I often find
That if I'm calm with Left, and kind,
He'll do a lot of things, although
He's awkward and a little slow;
And so I often think, perhaps,
He's much like me, and other chaps,
Who know enough to do our part,
But some quick fellow, extra smart,
Jumps in and does it first, and so
We just get used to being slow.
And that's the way we don't get trained,
Because, perhaps, we're just left-brained!

AT THE CONCERT.

YESTERDAY papa asked me did It want to go
Out wif him. Papa he calls me "It," you know,
And I says "Hm-hm!" 'cause "Hm-hm" means "Yes,"
And papa he looks at me and he says, "I guess
It can go all right. That's a awful dress,
But Its coat will cover it up and Its hat
Will cover Its hair, so we needn't comb that.
If I'm good enough, why, I guess It'll do,"
He says, and he went right out—and me, too.

Yesterday we rode and we rode and papa he
Give me a penny, but 'twasn't fer me,
'Cause a man wif a cap on he took it away
When papa says, "This feller's going to pay."
And I pushed the ringer that stops the car
When you want to get off where the thee-ter are.
And I give 'nother penny where the man peeks through
And he let papa in—and he let me, too.

Yesterday a lot of mens, they blew
On a horn and a drum, like I like to do,
And they blew and they blew and made more noise
Than free, four, forty hundred boys.
And a man—their papa I guess he wuz—
He shook a stick at 'em—like my pa does.

And the more that he shook why the worser they
blew.
They knew he was their papa—and I did, too.

Yesterday a mamma come out then and I said
Was *her* mamma gettin' her fixed fer bed?
'Cause her dress was off her, and papa says, "Look
And you'll see," and the papa-man shook
His stick at her, like he done it before,
And she sauced him back and he done it some more.
And the mens with the horns and the drums they
blew.
And she just hollered!—and I did, too.
Yesterday papa says, "Ssh! don't you know
You mustn't 'terrup' the lady so?"
And I says, "No, papa, I don't see
Why I mustn't. .Ain't she 'terruptin' me?"
And papa laughs and says, "Well, you're the worst."
And I says, "Anyway, she hollered first."
And ever'body was so glad when she got through
That they just pat-a-caked—and I did, too.

Yesterday papa he says, "Here!
Take that and stop your mouth, now, that's a dear!"
And he gimme chawk-late candy and I eat
A lot and spread the rest out on the seat,
And then a lady wif a white dress on, she come
A-scrougin' in and sat right down on thum!
And papa grabbed me up and he says, "Whew!
I'm glad we got away alive!"—and I was, too.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS.

HOW on Earth did the fiction grow
That Santa Claus is a man? Ho, ho!
Santa Claus is a woman. There!
I make the assertion fair and square
And you can blazon it everywhere.

How do I know that the thing is true?
'Tis simple enough. I'll leave it to you.
Who knows what you want for Christmas? Say!
Is it a man who goes away
Right after breakfast and stays all day?

Or is it a woman who's always by
With the light of love in her watching eye?
Why, a Santa Claus man would bring white rats
To a girl whose chief delight was cats,
And books to a boy who wanted bats!

And the Christmas stocking—can you dream
That a man conceived that clever scheme?
A man would have got a clumsy box
And bothered with nails and screws and locks,
Or, at the best, would have hung up socks.

And then the name. Who ever heard
Of a man named "Santy?" It's absurd.
But every one knows how little folks name
A dear friend "Auntie," just the same
As though they really had kinship's claim.

And so it happened that people came
To think 'twas really her given name;
And this, by a natural error was
Corrupted to "Santie" just because
She was known as "Mrs. Auntie Claus."

INDIRECT DISCOURSE.

WHEN I was borned, I wasn't nothin' but
A little baby. Was my eyes shut
Like kitty-babies? Papa, will you buy
A skitching-rope en chatelaine-pony fer my
Birthday? En a paint-brush, too?
Wolves can't talk, rilly, just like people do,
Kin they? But mebby once they could,
Er how'd the wolf say, "Each-choo-up!" at Ridin'-Hood?

Is it to-morrow, papa? Well, why ain't to-day
To-morrow? Yesterday, what made you say
To-morrow 'ld come to-day? Mm-*mm*, I don't see
Why. Papa! papa, can't you hark at me?
Aw, papa, if to-morrow was to-day
Does that make yesterday to-morrow? Say!
En, papa, will you buy me a numbrella
Like's on the groc'ry-wagon? How could Cinderella
Dance without breakin' 'em? Was her sisters mad
That used to scoff at her? Or was they glad?
Why didn't she lose the *other* slipper off?
Say, papa, will you learn me how to scoff?

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

What was I when I wasn't borned? Are dead
Folks folks, or are they un-borned? Aunt Lou said
'At I'd be dead, too, sometime. I'll be mad
Ef I'm dead. Well, what makes folks sad
If ever'body dies? Does God make 'em dead?
When Aunt Lou comes, can I sleep in your bed?
My room's the spare room when folks come to visit.
It isn't nice of God to make folks dead folks, is it?

THE MOO-COW-MOO.

MY pa held me up to the moo-cow-moo
So clost I could almost touch,
En I fed him a couple of times, or two,
En I wasn't a fraid-cat much.

But ef my papa goes into the house,
En mamma, she goes in, too,
I just keep still, like a little mouse,
Fer the moo-cow-moo might moo!

The moo-cow-moo's got a tail like a rope
En its raveled down where it grows,
En it's just like feeling a piece of soap
All over the moo-cow's nose.

En the moo-cow-moo has lots of fun
Just swinging his tail about;
En he opens his mouth and then I run—
'Cause that's where the moo comes out.

En the moo-cow-moo's got deers on his head
En his eyes stick out o' their place,
En the nose o' the moo-cow-moo is spread
All-over the end of his face.

En his feet is nothing but finger-nails
  En his mamma don't keep 'em cut,
En he gives folks milk in water-pails
  Ef he don't keep his handles shut.

'Cause ef you er me pulls the handles, why
  The moo-cow-moo says it hurts,
But the hired man he sits down clost by
  En squirts en squirts en squirts!

THE HEN.

WE got a hen, we have, en he lays eggs!
He's lame, because he only has two legs;
His front legs are just feathers, en he flies
If you chas him. Anyhow, he tries,
En flops hisself away up in the air
En falls up the back fence, er anywhere.

We got a claw-cat en he's got four legs,
But he's so lazy he won't lay no eggs
Ner nothin'. He flies up the bark
Of trees, en nights when it's all dark
He stays out doors en hollers like he's cryin',
En I p'tend to suster he's a lion
A-seekin' round to eat us in our bed,
Till we get scared en cover up our head.

Our chicky-hen has got two tooths that sticks
Out of the front end of his face en picks
Up worms en bugs en things, en then
He swallers 'em. Glad I ain't a hen
En eat old, nasty worms. En I bet
I'm glad I ain't a worm, too, to be et!

Our claw-cat he can't rilly fly, bicause
He's got to have a tree to put his claws,
But if he was a robin he could fly
Clear to the moon, 'way up-stairs in the sky.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

A rooster ain't a hen. He just p'tends
To be. He's got a feather-duster where he ends,
En p'raps it gets made over when he's done
With it, 'cause our old hen has got a wore-out one!

WHEN FOLKS COME T'OUR HOUSE.

EVER' one 't comes t'our house talks just the same.
"Hullo, li'l girl, they say, "en what's your name?"
"Why, what a pritty name!" they say, en then
Bimeby they ast me what's my name again.
En then, when I feel silly for thum, why
They say, "Oh, dear, I do believe it's shy."

Then, mebby, affer while, they ast me, "P'raps
I'd like to come en sit up on their laps,"
En when I say "Uh-uh!" they coax en coax,
As if I ought to want to sit on folks.

En then they ast how old am I, en "Oo!"
They say en lift me like it hurts thum to.
En what a nice, big girl I am, as tho,
Bigness is niceness, 'cause it isn't so,
'Cause if it was, there's lots of folks would be
As nicer as my mama is—or me.

En then they stick their fingers in me—there
En pat me on the head en muss my hair
En say I got my papa's forrid, but
If I do things to thum, pa says "Tut, tut,
I mustn't!" en asts me "Can't I see
Manners in folks is imperdence in me."

En then they ast me how'd I like to come
En leave my papa's home en live with thum?
En one day Mr. Fred who comes to take
My aunt to thee-ters en who eats more cake
Than I get ever' supper-time, when he
Is ast by her en ma to stay to tea,
He ast me that, en I says, "No, I can't,
But if you want some one reel much, why ast my
aunt."
En then Aunt Lou en him they both got red
En mama says, "Come, dear, it's time for bed."

THE LINGUISTS.

WHEN you say "Silver plate," that's when
You're Frence 'n' sayin' "If you please," en
then
Ef you're a German, why you talk reel plain
En p'lite en answer "Thank you," en that's "Donkey-
chain."

"Leave her, Dick," means "I love you." Sister, she
Says 'tisn't "Leave her, Dick," it's "Lee-bee-dee,"
But that's silly. German's hard fer her,
But Frence is easy. She says "Weemy-sir,"
Fer "Yes, sir," just as nice, en says, "No, ma'am,"
But that ain't "Weemy-sir," it's "Weemy-dam."

Language is funny, ain't it? But it's awful pritty.
"Mercy" is Frence, en it means "Thanks," but "Pity"
Is German en means "Please." En "See" en "Do"
Are just the same, 'cause both of them mean "You."

When you meet folks in Frence, you always say
"Be sure," because that means "Good day."
But once we spoke a German dialogue
En then "Good day" was only "Gut-and-dog."

En "Come-on-seven-tail" means "How de do,"
Er some folks say "Come on, you party, you."

Sister she says that to be *reel* p'lite
Commee voo portee voo is mostest right,
But that ain't *language*. You must say reel words
When you're a-talkin', 'relse you're just like birds
That say things, but can't talk. I'm so good in
Frence,
Bicause I always listen fer the sense,
But sister she's the biggest goose you ever saw
En always answers "Jennie, come prong pa!"

THE PAPA-DOLLY.

EF my papa was a dolly, tell you what
He'd have lots o' things 'at he ain't got,
'Cause I'd go down town en buy a sled
En a trumpet en a dolly's bed
En give 'em to him. Bet I would
Ef my papa was a dolly en I could.
Course, ef he was dist a dolly, mebbe he
Couldn't use 'em en would give 'em back to me.

Ef my papa was a dolly, I'd dist buy
The biggest cake fer him 'at ever I
Could find, en I'd put jelly on it, too,
En jam wif sugar on to git soaked through
En taste nice. En I'd take en slop
Some honey on, en m'lasses on the top
Wif heaps o' frostin' on to make it sweet
En then my pa en me 'ld eat en eat
En eat. Course though ef papa'd be
My doll, he'd give his part to me.

Ef my papa was a dolly sure, I'd dress
Him in a yallow hat, er pink, I guess,
Wif green twousers en red slippers, so he'd look
Like the pitchers in my Giunt Book.
But ef he was a dolly, I don't s'pose
He'd care a bit ef he had pritty clo'es
Er didn't. En then, mebbe,—mebbe ef
He didn't, I'd dist wear 'em my own se'f!

THE SHAVE STORE.

YESTERDAY, papa says "Will it behave,
If I should take it while I get a shave?"
'N' I says "Yes," as loud as I could talk,
So me en he we went out for a walk
Clear to the Shave Store. En then I sat there
En papa climbed up in a dentist's chair
En had a bib on. En the shave man took
En painted papa till he made him look
Like frostin' on a angel-cake. Mm! he looked nice!
'N' I thought the man was goin' to cut a slice.
He took a knife en wiped en wiped it, but
He didn't hurt my papa. He just cut
The frostin' off his face en took another
Knife en wiped it on a piece o' luther
En painted papa more, en cut en cut,
En mussed his hair, en slapped his face en shut
The old knife up. En washed his face, he did
Like papa washes mine sometimes, en calls me "Kid."
En he put baby-powder on him, too,
En smelled him up, en when he was all through,
The shave store man says "'Bye, young lady, when
You want another shave, just call again!"

IF I DIDN'T FORGET HOW OLD I WAS.

IF I didn't forget how old I was,
Do you think I'd act like I often does?
Do you think I'd swing on the front yard gate,
If I could remember that I was eight?

If I didn't forget how soon I'd grow
To be a big man like Uncle Joe,
Do you think my pa would have to scold
'Cuz I didn't do what I was told?

Do you think I'd set my ma so wild
An' act so much like a little child,
If I didn't forget I was half-past eight,
An' would Miss Brown have to keep me late?

Miss Brown said I was "a little fiend,"
An' I didn't know what the old thing meaned,
But she said 'twas becuz I played so rough,
An' it made my ma just cry—sure 'nough.

If I didn't forget, do you s'pose that I
Would ever act so's to make *her* cry?
And don't you suppose I'd behave just fine,
If I didn't forget I was going-on-nine?

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

If I could remember, do you suppose
I wouldn't take care of my Sunday clo'es?
An' would I get mad at my Cousin Ben
Without getting right away good again?

Pa says he believes I was just *born* bad,
An' Uncle Joe says that I'm "like my dad,"
An' Aunt Lou says *she* don't suppose
I'll ever be better, but ma—she *knows,*
An' she hugs me clost with a kiss, becuz
She says I forgot how old I was!

LEOPOLD.

THIS is the story of Leopold,
A man of the world just five years old,
A little bit wise and a little bit bold,
Who wanted a guinea of gold.

Poor little, sad little five-year-old,
Of woes of avarice never told,
Too much charmed by the gleamy gold
Wanted one piece to have and to hold.

Papa might laugh and mama might scold,
Toys grow tarnished or gray with mold,
Porridge be hot, or porridge be cold,
Little cared little Leopold.

Out of the house the boykin strolled,
And round and round the blue eyes rolled,
Always looking for gold, gold, gold.

Money was everywhere—wealth untold—
Copper and silver and glistening gold,
Greedily grasped and stingily doled,
Cheated for, fought for, bought and sold.

Across the counters it slid and rolled,
And big iron safes looked cross and cold
And stretched their arms to catch and hold,
As a miser does, the gleamy gold.

And who could have forced or who cajoled
One piece from their grasping, clasping hold?

Tired, so tired, grew our five-year-old;
(Gold-hunting feet should be harder soled)
And the big church bell the death-knell tolled
Of by-gone hours, till at last he strolled
Into a street of a different mold,
Where nothing was bought and nothing sold.

"Ho!" sniffed sad little Leopold,
As if to say that to search for gold
In a place where none of it round him rolled
Were foolish in a wise five-year-old.

He turned to go, when lo, and behold!
Down at his feet in the untrod mold
Lay a bright guinea of gold, gold, gold!

But no one ever has seen or told
Of a satisfied searcher after gold:
"I'll look for some more!" cried Leopold.

Now aren't we all like five-year-old,
After something gleamy as gold?
And perhaps the prize we hope to hold
Is down the street we haven't strolled,
So be a bit wise and a little bit bold,
But don't be greedy like Leopold!

NO SHOOTIN' OFF THIS YEAR.

(Remarks of a victim of the movement to curtail the usual festivities of the Fourth.)

THERE ain't no Declaration. Naw
There ain't no Fourth-July.
There ain't no "free 'n' equal" law,
'N' Washin'ton *could* lie.
They never dumped no Boston tea;
It's fakey, all you hear,
Fer pop says there ain't goin' to be
No shootin' off this year.

They talk about pertectin' *us*
To keep the Fourth in peace;
But *we* ain't makin' any fuss,
Ner askin' fer police.
We ain't afraid of smoke 'n' noise,
Er little lumps of lead;
'N' why should they blame livin' boys
Because some boys is dead?

It ain't my fault the fuse went out
'N' Tom went up 'n' blew;
Besides, he's just as well without
His extry ear, er two.
They cut off Oscar's leg, but he
Don't seem to miss it much;
He'd beat us hoppin' yet, if we
'Ud let him use his crutch.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

It ain't my fault that Willie blew
  His hand off, like a chump.
I told him what those big ones do;
  He needn't 'a' took the stump.
It ain't my fault a rocket flies
  'N' hits some him, er her;
*Some*body's got to wear glass eyes;
  That's what glass eyes is fer!

It ain't my fault the stuff was bad
  They made Jim's pistol of;
Besides the preacher said "We're glad
  He's happier up above!"
Bet *I'd* be happier, anyhow,
  Most any place but here,
Where they ain't goin' to allow
  No shootin' off this year!

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

A THURRU' REST.

EXAMINATION'S over 'n' I don't care if I passed,
An' I don't care if I didn't, fer vacation's come at last!
I thought 'tould never git here, fer the days dragged by as slow
As Davy Jones's ma, who calls 'n' don't know when to go.
Pop says I ort to go-to work, but ma says *she* knows best,
'N' what a boy of my age needs is just a thurru' rest.

So me an' Dave 'll get up every mornin' bright 'n' soon,
An' pitch 'n' ketch till breakfast 'n' bat up flies till noon.
'Cause after dinner every day the Hustlehards—his nine—
Is goin' to play a series fer the champeenship with mine:
The one behind at dark has got to say the other's best.
Gee! ain't I glad vacation's here 'n' I got time to rest.

Then I'm a-goin' to learn the other fellers how to dive,
An' rassle Billy Potter, best thirteen in twenty-five.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

'N' after supper Dave 'n' I are goin' to have a race,
Ten times around the block, 'n' if I win he'll bust my face.
That's what *he* says! But he'll find out which one of us is best;
I'm feeling pretty strong now since I'm havin' such a rest.

There's goin' to be a picnic 'n' you bet yer life I'm goin';
I'm entered in the swimmin' race, 'n' greasy pole, 'n' rowin'.
The sack-race 'n' potato race are mine, I bet a dime,
'N' in "the mile" I simply *got* to win the prize fer time,
'Cause it's a ticket to the Gym. I like that prize the best,
Fer a feller needs some exercise as well as just a rest.

I'm goin' to visit uncle's farm. He lets me do the chores
'N' work just like the farm-hands do, right in the fields out-doors,
I'm goin' to git a bag to punch, so's I won't git too fat:
We're goin' to have a six-day-race—I got to train fer that.
I want to do so many things, I don't know which is best;
I bet vacation's over 'fore I get a thurru' rest!

WILLIE'S LETTERS TO HIS TEACHER.

I.

(Being the product of a devoted adherent to the modern system of enriched education in vogue in some of our public schools.)

DEER TEECHER
My fother he said he'd give
A quatter to me if Ide spel "sive"
I kno that aint the way to spel
The blame old word but I can't tell
Whether its e-i like believe
Or whether its i-e like receive,
But there ain't no feathers on grasshoppers legs
'Cause a grasshopper dont set on his eggs

Last Saterdy ma sent me down street
To get some potaties and eggs and meet
And when I come back she said that I
Was just a dollar aand twelv cents shy
Cause I cant figger But I says Well
Maybe I cant but I can tell
How many feat has a cattypiller
And she curls up dede if you try to kill her

Joe Miller he said that hed bet a cent
I couldent tell whether "I had went"

Willie's Letters to his Teacher

Or "I was been" was correctest, so
Ile be very much glad if youll let me kno
Cause I ain't no good on grammer this term
But I kno which end of a angle-werm
Is its head because you taut me which
Your lovving skoller

WILIE N RICH.

II.

DEER TEECHER
Fother don't think it smort
For me to kno so much about Ort
And Spiders He says if I
Could rite and sipher and spel hed try
To fergive my knoin some less about bottiny,
Though he wouldent care if I wasent taut any
He says that Gography fits my needs
More better than spiders and all their breeds.

But I says to pa I dont see why
I should studdy ritin so much fer I
Am a goin to rite on a type-riter when
I git growed up like other men
And pa kind of laughd and he says Well
But a typeriter dont kno how to spel
But I wasent stumped like he thaught I was
Fer Ime goin to invent a kind that does

And I dont think errythmeticks any good
Fer I cant figger and never could
So when Ime a man you bet Ile look
At the tables and ansers in the book
And Gography too I think is snide
Fer if I travel Ile git a gide
And I bet I git through without a hitch
Your lovving skoller

WILIE N RICH.

III.

DEER TEECHER

Fother he say I ot
To studdy the things that was formly taut
When he was litel He says to kno
The upproxymit lenth of a june-Bugs toe
Is all well enouf but spelins better
And to kno how to write a bisniz letter.
But you said Gorge Washintons letters tell
That he didn't know very good to spel

Pa keeps a naggin at me to try
To umprove my ritin He says that I
Cant rite no better than a hen can crow,
But why should I studdy ritin so
When Horse Greely, he couldent rite
You said his ritin was such a site

His note lookt like a dunn to a credditor
And that was the reason he was a edditor

I told pa that and I said you said
Lincoln might of been bigger around the head
If hed had more chance to go to scool
And studdy accordin to moddern rule
Pa give his sholders a coupple of shrugs
I suppose he knu a lot about bugs
He says Pa says so many things which
There aint no sens in

WILIE N RICH.

IV.

DEER TEECHER

Fother said there's no doubt
Ide learned all there was to kno about
Common werms and things but he rather thot
Backteary might learn me qite a lot
So please wont you learn us all about jerms
Mikekrobes and bassilly and other werms,
So we can be bizzily kept emploid
And scool life wont seem a acking voyd

Bassilly is what gits in your lungs
And they aint got stummichs or teeth or tungs
But they eat till your lungs is gone and so
You aint got enny breth left to blow.

Trickinny gits into sossidge meet
And then into yours And they eat and eat
Till your mussels is all so et and sore
You cant even chin yourself no more

I love the studdy of bugs and werms
But I hope youl learn us more about jerms
Fer they ain't no use that I can see
Except to be studdied by skollers like me
They swim in the milk and give you things
They fly in the air without no wings
They lite on your skin and you git the itch
Your lovving skoller

WILIE N RICH.

V.

DEER TEECHER
I now take up my pen
To rite you Ime in trubble agen
I thaut I had lernd all there was to kno
Of werms but Ime scared it aint qite so.
Last nite pa was teasin and after while
He says with a sort of a grin and smile
Wilie he says, and when I says What
Says he How many feet has a tape-werm got

Deer teecher think how I felt fer O
How coud I tell him I diddent kno

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

At first I thaut that likely enougf
Pa dident kno neether so I tride bluff
And I says Why he aint got none at all
He rolls hisself up into a ball
Like you by in the stoar—of tape you kno
And pa, he says Deer me Is that so

A tape-werm I says don't do nothin but eat
And so he groes stummicks instead of feet
A angle-werm eats til his sides is sore
And stretches hisself and eats some more
And so does a tape-werm And pa says Say
I saw a collection of them today
And as near as Ime abbel to juddg they run
From a twenty foot tape-werm down to one

Teecher I was stuck But I says Why pop
A one foot tape-werm could only hop
And with twenty feet hed be off his feed
Fer imaginin he was a centypeed
But teecher I said it withowt no hart
Fer reelly it give me an awful start
To find I was ignerrent on a werm
So please let us studdy on tapes next term
Fer things has come to a pritty pitch
When I dont kno werms Yours
WILIE N RICH.

A BESETTING SIN.

(As Confessed by a Youthful Penitent.)

I SHAN'T be bad no more, I shan't. I'm goan to be reel good;
I heard a preacher-man an' he said ever'body could,
Ef they jus' kep' a-tryin' and a-tryin', day b' day,
An' ef they didn't try they'd go—some place I mustn't say,
Er mother says I mustn't, 'nd so, o' course, I shan't;
Don't see why preachers says it, ef another feller can't!
But I'm a goan to be *reel* good. I shan't pull pussy's tail,
Ner tie our nice, old Nodie to a nasty, old tin pail,
Like I did once when Tommy Johnson said I didn't dast:
I'd like to fix that feller, but my wicked days is past!
I shan't git mad when baby sucks the paint off all my blocks,
Ner spend the cent pa gives me fer the missionary box.
I'm goan to be a martire, an' I shan't be bad one speck;
Ain't even goan to cry when mother makes me wash my neck.

Most martire fellers wasn't much. Why, any circus man'll
Cuff them lions 'round an' do it just as slick as Dan'l.
Aunt Becky thinks it's somethin' great to live in sacks 'nd ashes.
I think *that's* fun! An' hair-cloth shirts! I bet they got the rashes
'Nd wear them shirts to scratch 'em. Of course that Jony feller
Inside that big, old whale, all dark like way down-in-our-cellar,
He had a heap o' spunk, *he* had; but I tol' Aunty Beck
He didn't allus have to go an' wash his dog-gone neck.

That's goan to be the worstest thing, an' orful hard, I know,
But I'm dissolved to do it! ef I *do* hate it so.
It's funny hatey things is good, but I suppose it's true,
An' things you like is mostly things you hadn't ought to do.
An' water's *cold,* er ef it's hot, it's het so much it's scaldy;
An' 'sides, it wets yer collar all around yer Garry-baldy,

An' runs all down yer back, an' then the soap gits in
yer eyes,
Because the towel ain't where it *was*—an' then some-
times I cries.
But I shan't cry no more, though p'r'aps I'll want to,
I expec',
But when I'm growed, I ain't a goan to *ne'ber* wash
my neck!

But now I'm goan to do it, till I'm old enough, at
last,
To know what things I dassen't do, an' other things
I dast.
An' ef I have a little boy, as course I will, I 'spec',
I bet you forty dollars that I'll make *him* wash *his*
neck!

"ON THE JUDGMUNT DAY."

THAT Jim Young's a mean old thing,
What you think he done?
He knocked my alley out the ring
'N' grabbed it up 'n' run.
An' it *wasn't* keepses, like he says it was;
'Cause keeps is wicked gamblin'; knows it, too, he does.
Why'd he run away for, if he thought tuz fair?
He's a mean, old cheatter, now! but I don't care.
He'll git ketched up sometime where he can't run way;
An' he'll git a lickin' on the Judgmunt Day.

"What you laughin' at? It's so.
If you're bad er naughty!
Guess my mother ought to know
'N' she tol' me 'n' Tottie
Not to tell no stories, ner to say bad things,
Ner hook the groc'ry apples, ner to pull flies' wings,
Ner b'unpolite to comp'ny, ner walk the railroad ties,
Ner to *fight*—espechly fellers not yer size—
Ner never go a-swimmin', less she says we may
Er *we'd* git a lickin' on the Judgmunt Day.

"Joey Smith, he's orful bad.
He's much badder'n me.
'Cause he's a *stealer!* Oncet he had
Two birdnests from our tree,

An' the little 'cheepses'—course they couldn't fly—
Jus' was lef' there, nakid, on the groun' to die.
I was jus' as mad as ever I could be.
I'd a killed that feller! but he's bigger'n me.
I don't care. He'll ketch it. 'N' so'll Grace 'n' Nell,
Cause they tol' I whispered, 'n' they oughtent tell.
'N' I was kep' at recess, so's I couldn't play;
But teacher'll git a lickin' on the Judgmunt Day.

"If I'm good as sugar, say!
Wun't I have the fun
Watchin' other chaps that day
When the lickin's done?
Gee! I'll do it. I'll try to allus 'use the mat,'
Keep the ten commandments, never plague the cat,
Take good care of Tottie, not play games too rough—
Be like grannie tells me, 'n' if that ain't good 'nough,
I'll jus' walk up, yessir, up to God 'n' say
'I'm here to take my lickin'' on the Judgmunt Day."

THE TICK-TACK ON THE WINDOW.

WAS it many years ago, Will, that we boys kept Hallowe'en?
I close my eyes a moment and there's not a day between.
It seems as if Time grew so deft, his hour-glass faster whirled
Every year we tramp together towards the ending of the world.
Do you remember how we bobbed for nickels in a tub
And how I got the most because my nose was such a snub?
You remember those big apples that we hung up on a string
And tried to take a bite of during their elusive swing?
But while the fun indoors was good, it didn't make a mark
'Longside the wild excitement in the eerie, queery dark,
When we used to hang a tick-tack on the window.

Such pranks we played! The staidest gate would wander from his own
And hang himself on some old tree without a motive known.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

A string across the sidewalk laid a big policeman flat,
And another in the air caught Uncle Ezek's new plug hat.
A dozen door bells rang at once, a dozen heads popped out,
But nothing but a smothered laugh was lingering about.
A turnip was a treasure and a cabbage stump a prize,
Which held a weird significance in owlish, urchin eyes,
While a pumpkin and a candle were a most unholy revel,
Till we felt a sweet assurance that our ally was the devil,
And then we hung a tick-tack on the window.

Some desperate hero clambered up the roof and slowly crept
Beneath the bedroom window where the fearsome "old folks" slept.
He did the deed and back he came from dangers worse than death,
While we unleashed our lungs again and welcomed back a breath.
O, the quivery, shivery ecstasy, as, snuggling in the grass,
We pulled the string and heard the sound against the window glass!

The quaint, delicious horror that came slipping down
the string
We knew was but a shadow of the monstrous vam-
pire thing
Which clicked behind the old folks' ears and flicked
before their eyes,
As they credited their tortures unto every fiend that
flies,
Except that little tick-tack on the window.

Ha, ha! I'd like to slip behind a certain judge I know
In some grave *lis sub judice,* with talk of *quid pro*
quo,
And cry, "You rascal! What d'ye mean by sliding
down that roof
And sousing in that rain barrel? Don't deny it. I've
the proof,
The minister will bear me out. He pulled the rain
barrel down,
Or you'd be swallowing wigglers yet, unless you
chanced to drown!"
Ho, ho! those pranks of Hallowe'en. I almost think,
you know,
If the devil has a family in the engine-room below,
God shuts his eyes on Hallowe'en and gives the imps
free scope
To hurl a cabbage stump against the golden gates of
Hope,
And hang a tick-tack right on Heaven's window!

A CHRISTMAS KID.

'MEMBER once, long time ago, 'most a month, I guess,
Gram says, "Would you want more pie?" en course I tol' her, "Yes,"
En pa says, "Grammaw, don't you know the chil' has had two slices,
'Sides the fruit en puddin' en a help or two of ices?"
So I didn't git no more, en then I wisht, I did,
That I could be a man en *eat,* instead of just a kid.

'Member once—suppose it must of been the Fourth July—
Pa was shootin' rockers off, clean up to the sky,
'N' I says, "Lemme shoot 'em, pa," en ma, she gasps her breath,
En says, "You mustn't let the child! he'll burn hisself to death!"
En pa says, "Too bad, son, but we must walk the way we're bid!"
En then I wisht I was a man, 'stead of just a kid.

'Member once a great, big feller took away my sled,
Hit me right here, on the nose, en it bled 'n' bled.
He was 'most the biggest boy, I bet, you ever see;
Reglar giunt, he was, twict again as big as me,
En ever' time he passed our house, I run away 'n' hid
En wisht *I* was a giunt, too, instead of just a kid.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

'Member lots o' times I wisht 'at I could be growed up
En drink real tea fer supper out o' pa's big mustache cup,
En have a nickel fer my own self ever' single day,
With no one sayin', "Course it's yours, but lemme put it 'way."
En no one askin' where I am en what it was I did.
But Chris'mas time I'm glad I ain't a man, but just a kid.

'Member last year's Chris'mas, how old Santy come 'n' brought
Such a stack I couldn't tell half the things I got.
A railroad, en a jumping frog, a wagon en a goat,
En ma, she only got a di-mon' brooch 'n' sealskin coat.
O, yes, I got some club skates, too, en went right out 'n' slid
En was so glad I wasn't growed, but only just a kid.

'Member once, one Chris'mas, pa, he fetched some things fer ma,
En ma had went down town en bought some other things fer pa.
En they give 'em to each other, en I was so sorry, 'cause
It showed that they was bad en dassent have no Santy Claus!

L. of C.

It almost makes me cry sometimes a-wonderin' what
they did,
En ain't I glad I ain't growed up, but only just a
kid!

MONDAY IN SEPTEMBER.

(Which is the theme of a strictly confidential letter to Mr. Peter Perkins from his friend, Mr. Buck Brown.)

DERE PETE
I thought I'd write to you and say how bad I feel,
Most like I didn't never want to eat another meal.
Septembres come, and I don't need to tell you why bicause
I know you wisht that you was dead or else that Teacher was

I wisht thered come a sighclone that would blow the schoolhouse down,
I wisht the Indiuns would come and try to scalp the town,
I wisht thered be a war and I could go and fite the Terk
I wisht that I was Pa without a thing to do but werk.

CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT.

Course I can't do much *reel* work yet, but I could
ring the buz
Thats at his desk and boss the clurks as easy as *he*
does.
And if I can't *rite* letters good, I'm sure that I
could tell
A girl just what I wanted wrote, if she knew how to
spel.
I wisht Septembre was a month that dident have no
Mundys,
I wisht there was more Saterdys or maybe even
Sundys.

I wisht a Annerkist would throw a bom at Teachers
face
And when she dodged Id ketch it like I do at second
base
And fire it back at him as if he was a playin ferst
And hit him plum between the eyes the second that
it berst
And then the Teacherd cry and say "you nobble,
nobble yuth.

Youv saved my life and it is yourn forever and fersooth,"
Just like the girl does on the stage and then I'd swaller hard
And say "twas but my dooty and I scorn to take reward,
But lest my presents here should make my perpose grow inferm,
Ill bid you now a fond ado and wont come back this term."

I bet a quatter thogh no Annerkist wont bring me no such luck,
So hope this finds you feelin just as well as
Your frend BUCK.

"SANTY'S LITTLE BOY."

IF I was Santy's little boy, I'd dress
Up in a polar-bear-skin suit, I guess;
En then I'd have a grea', big sled en go
Sleigh-ridin' on a hill of sugar-snow,
En have a snow-ball fight wif pop-corn balls,
En have a reindeer horse like those 'at hauls
The Santy-sleigh, en have him painted red,
So's he'd look pretty, en jus' like my sled.

If I was Santy's little boy, he'd fix
A house fer me, made out of choc'late bricks
Wif ice-cream plaster! En I'd have him make
The floors of apple-pie en angel-cake;
En then a fountain squirtin' lemonade
En big enough to get into en wade;
En raisin-trees out-doors, wif fences 'round
Made out of candy-canes stuck in the ground.

If I was Santy's little boy, I bet
I'd have a Chrismas ever' day, en get
Jus' lots of presents. En he'd plant a tree
En ast my papa in, so's he could see
Me light it up, en then my mama—ooh!
I wouldn't have her, then, ner papa, too!
I guess—I guess I don't fink I'd enjoy
A bein' Santy Claus's little boy.

In Remembrance.

THE LITTLE BOY WHO LEFT US.

I.

THE little lonely birth of him! He made
His way to Earth alone and none could aid
Him with a word of cheer,
Could reach his little unattunèd ear
To tell the waiting welcome, the soft breast
Whereon his drooping little head should rest,
His to command by noon, or night,
In dark or light;
The life-milk and the bliss
Of gaining it through the long, deep-drawn kiss,
The never-tiring arms, the cuddling croon,
How could he know that all this boon
And benison were his, when he should win
The harbor-passage in,
Should reach the port of Earth
Through that tempestuous voyage men call birth?

II.

The little lonely life of him! He dwelt
Cored in our hearts, yet only partly felt
The love which folded him. How could we pour
The rapturous lore

Of love with which we bubbled to the brim,
So it might also flood the heart of him?
Our syllables and their strange ways
Came in half-foreign phrase
To little, unaccustomed ears, while his wee words
Fluttered like baby birds,
Untaught of flight.
Could he know, quite,
The meaning of the cuddling care? And did we reach
Without the definite harmonies of speech
The surest, sweetest tone
To chord his little being with our own?

III.

The little lonely death of him! True, at the best
All men must sup alone with the last guest.
The sweet and sun-lit living room
Is ever built beside the quiet tomb.
Between them is a passage, not so wide
That ever two may tread it side by side.
Hard, hard! yet, groping down the narrow hall,
The journeying one may hear our saddened call,
Our cheering, sympathizing cries,
Or the shared sorrow of the last goodbyes.
But he, the little, wee one, could he know
Our hearts were cloven with the woe?

The love which gilds the dark distress,
The blossom in the wilderness,
The one sweet in the bitterness,
The human murmur of the moan,
The music in the dirge men call a groan,
He could not know. Alone! alone!

IV.

And is he lonely still? The dazed mind gropes
Amid a labyrinth of doubts and hopes.
The firmest founded faith
Melts to a misty wraith
Upraising, like a wild bird's cry,
The fierce demand of "Why?"
Nay, mock me not by saying He who gave
Has cradled the wee body in the grave.
God were not good to grant such Gift and then,
Capricious, filch it back again.
Life is for living. Should the lamp be torched
To break it ere the wick be scarcely scorched?
Lonely? Ah, only half I hope that he is not,
Fearing that we who loved and love him are forgot.
Selfish, I own, but Love's delicious wine
Breathes ever forth the sweet bouquet of "Mine!"
Lonely? How were he else? Does not the baby flower
Droop in its tender hour,

Transplanted? Thrives it in stranger-earth
As in the native soil which gave it birth?
Lonely? But in the sea of Loneliness,
The great sea where the tide of death's distress
Rises and ebbs and rises till the press
Floods our own nostrils with its bitterness,
In that sea is a Beacon and its flame
Kindles the heart of man today the same
As in the uncounted centuries which are fled;—
Faith of Reunion with the Loved and Dead.

EARTH-OLD.

THE sound of a woman crying
The cry of an earth-old pain;
Her brow is gnarled and knotted tight,
Her cheeks are drawn and her lips are white,
But she knows her hour is buying
(With a price of no man's gain)
The right of a little breath to be,
Of a tongue to taste, of eyes to see.

And a new little life is lying
And a new little voice set free.

The sound of a woman weeping
The wail of an earth-old woe;
Will skies ever more shine blue and bright?
Will hearts ever more beat high and light
As if no babe were keeping
From those who loved him so?
O, the pain of birth brings a rich reward,
But the pain of death—how hard, how hard!

Will he never more cease from sleeping
Under rain and sun and snow?

OUR LITTLE OWN BOY.

ALL the tune the boy could play
Was 'Over the hills and far away.'"
Or so we sang to our little own boy,
As he bubbled and babbled his birdling joy,
Perched on the end of his grandma's knee,
(For wonderful cronies were he and she.)
And never had aria, mass or glee
So dulcet a charm for him—or me!
So dulcet a charm? No, not one half,
As he chorused in with his little bird laugh
It tickled him so that a boy could play
Just "Over the hills and far away."

Where is our little own boy to-day?
Is he over the hills and far away?
Over the hills? Were it only true!
Hills may be crossed or tunnelled through.
Hills may be razed and their solid rock
Be battered down by the earthquake shock.
But what of the hills we cannot see
Which rise between my little boy and me?
Which divide the life which we know so little
From the life of which we know not one tittle.
That life, the birth into which is death,
And being is nothing of blood, or breath.
So much we at least may hope and dream,
We may even believe, or do we deem,

AT NIGHT.

SOMETIMES when Darkness spread for me her
robe of rest,
And Silence guarded by,
The Night-bird, Sleep, would startle from her nest,
Stirred by the baby's cry.

When night is deepest now, again and yet again
I lie with wide eyes wet:
It was his little cry which waked me then:
His silence wakes me yet.

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HERE ENDS "CHRONICLES OF THE LITTLE TOT" BY EDMUND VANCE COOKE: PRINTED BY THE DODGE PUBLISHING COMPANY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

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